

This Week In Congress

February 2, 2004

Dear Friend,

Welcome to "This Week in Congress." I hope you find this newsletter useful.

Appearing on Kansas Public Television

Tonight, I will be appearing live on Kansas Public Television to discuss the 2004 congressional session and to take calls from viewers. Dr. Richard Heil, with the Docking Institute of Public Affairs at Fort Hays State University, will moderate the program for Smoky Hills Public Television. Also taking part in the program will be John Montgomery, publisher and editor of the Hays Daily News.

The program will air live tonight, February 2, 2004 from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m. on Smoky Hills Public Television and Wichita Public Television KPTS. The program will also air at 11:00 p.m. tonight on the Topeka Public Television KTWU.

Keeping Boeing in Wichita

On Wednesday, Senators Sam Brownback and Pat Roberts, Congressman Todd Tiahrt and I discussed the recent reports that Boeing was leaving Wichita with Boeing CEO, Harry Stonecipher. With more than 12,400 employees, keeping Boeing and these jobs in Kansas is extremely important to our state's economy; therefore, my colleagues and I will be watching the situation closely.

Kansan Testifies Before House Committee on Agriculture

On Wednesday afternoon, Tim Baker, Executive Director of U.S. Custom Harvesters in Hutchinson, testified before the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture about the potential effects that the recent temporary guest worker proposals could have on the agriculture sector. The Agriculture Committee heard from witnesses who represent the major sections of the agriculture industry, as well as witnesses who represent the views of those concerned with U.S. immigration policy. I appreciated the opportunity to hear from Mr. Baker and look forward to working further on this issue.

Attending the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet

On Thursday evening, I attended the annual Salina Area Chamber of Commerce banquet. Retired Army General Tommy Franks served as the keynote speaker and spoke about the United States' War on Terror and his service as the commander of the allied forces in the Persian Gulf. General Franks was the chief of U.S. Central Command before he retired as a four-star general in August.

Also at the banquet, Sheldon Walle, senior vice president and general manager of ElDorado National, a Salina bus manufacturer, was installed as the new board chairman for 2004. Pat Foster, sales manager at Waitt Radio, was named 2003 Ambassador of the Year.

Hearing on Long-Term Care for Veterans

On Wednesday, the U.S. House Committee on Veterans Affairs held a hearing to look at the long-term care programs for veterans. The Department of Veterans Affairs Undersecretary for Health, Dr. Robert Roswell, testified before the committee. At the hearing we also examined ways to address the future long-term care needs of aging and disabled veterans. This hearing is an important step as we look for ways to provide our veterans with long-term care.

Continuing the "Big First" Listening Tour

In addition to being in Washington, D.C. this past week, I also held town hall meetings in Great Bend, Hudson, Larned, Salina, Minneapolis and Lincoln. I will be in Eskridge, White City and Enterprise on Thursday.

For more information about the tour stops and for a complete schedule, please visit my website at: http://www.house.gov/moranks01/_press2003/prTourSchedule04.html

I look forward to visiting with you when I am in your area.

In the Office

On Wednesday, I met with representatives from the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society. Janice Shobe of Oberlin, Evelyn Montandon of Dodge City, John Binder of Ellis, Jim Morford of Ellsworth, Philip Samuelson of Goodland, Susan Brown-Jones of Hays, Brenda Janda of Hutchinson, John Hellman of Junction City, Tom Shumate of Liberal, Dana Rice of Minneapolis, Mary Ann Schmitt of Sharon Springs, Paul Rainbolt of St. Francis, Rick Reeser of St. Francis and Wardale Binch of Wichita were all in with the Good Samaritan Society to discuss improving the level of staffing and infrastructure of nursing homes. We also discussed the importance of saving for long-term care.

In the office this week on behalf of the National Milk Producers were James Reed of Esbon, Tim Pauly of Conway Springs, Warren Winter of Hillsboro and Dennis Metz of Wellington to discuss the Australian Free Trade Agreement. Also in was Brian Baalman of Menlo, the current president of the Kansas Corn Growers Association, to discuss corn and ethanol production in Kansas.

In this week for a Capitol Tour were Carol Massieon of Seneca, and Brenda Koehler and Darlene Jones of Plainville.

Very truly yours,

Jerry